IN THE CLAIMS

1. - 3. (cancelled)

4. (currently amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim ~~1~~7, wherein ~~the~~ said message ~~conversion part~~ translator is operable to specify~~ies~~ a transmission destination of the message according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

5. (currently amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim ~~1~~7, wherein ~~the~~ said message ~~conversion part~~ translator is operable to perform~~s~~ automatic protocol conversion according to a message transmission destination specified according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

6. (currently amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim ~~1~~7, wherein ~~the~~ said message ~~conversion part~~ translator is operable to execute~~s~~ encryption processing that corresponds to a message transmission destination that is specified according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

7. (currently amended) An information processing apparatus for processing ~~a~~ transmission of a message ~~among a plurality of sites connected via a network~~, ~~the~~ said apparatus comprising:

a gateway operable to provide a local message exchange interface with a plurality of local sites of a system;

a B2B connector operable to provide a message exchange interface between the system and a plurality of sites external to the system~~a message broker that commits to an application processing of data that becomes necessary when message conversion is performed among the plurality of sites~~;

a message translator ~~that~~ operable to perform~~s~~ ~~mutual~~ conversion between any two of a plurality of message

formats on a message received from a sending site that is one of the plurality of local sites or one of the plurality of external sites, ~~according to a prescribed conditional sentence~~ said conversion being performed in response to ~~an arrival of~~ a field that is contained in the message and which serves~~ing~~ as a trigger ~~in~~ for a specific one of the plurality of message format~~s~~, and ~~when no rules are provided for processing the message, the message translator~~ to check~~s~~ sentence construction of the message ~~and~~ prior to perform~~ings~~ said translation of the message;

a message broker operable to transmit a request to and to receive an answer from an application or database that is needed to carry out data exchange processing between the sending site and at least one destination site;

a message router ~~that~~ operable to add~~s~~ a destination address to the message according to a~~n~~ ~~prescribed~~ associated piece of identification information contained in the message, to combine the message with another message having the destination address when the another message exists, the another message being received from another one of the plurality of local sites or from another one of the plurality of external sites, and to decompose the message into a plurality of messages corresponding to a plurality of a destination addresses when the piece of identification information is associated with the plurality of a destination addresses;

said ~~a~~ B2B connector ~~that provides a~~ being operable to process the addressed message ~~exchange interface between a system and a~~ or the plurality of addressed messages for transmission to one or more of the plurality of external site~~s~~ when the message was received from the one of the plurality of local sites~~outside the system~~; and

said a gateway ~~that provides a local message exchange interface between the system and a local site inside the system, wherein~~ being operable to process the addressed message ~~is transmittable so as to distribute information among a~~ or the plurality of ~~traders at~~ addressed messages for transmission to one or more of the plurality of local sites when the message was received from the one of the plurality of external sites~~,~~

~~wherein the message conversion converts the message into a prescribed format according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message~~.

8. - 9. (cancelled)

10. (currently amended) The information processing method according to claim ~~8~~14, wherein ~~in~~ said step of performing conversion on the message includes convertingsion ~~processing~~ the message ~~is converted~~ into a prescribed format according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

11. (currently amended) The information processing method according to claim ~~8~~14, wherein ~~in~~ said step of performing conversion on the message ~~conversion processing~~ includes specifying a message transmission destination ~~is specified~~ according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

12. (currently amended) The information processing method according to claim ~~8~~14, wherein ~~in~~ said step of performing conversion on the message ~~conversion processing~~ includes performing automatic protocol conversion ~~is performed~~ in correspondence with a message transmission destination specified according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

13. (currently amended) The information processing method according to claim ~~8~~14, wherein ~~in~~ said step of performing conversion on the message ~~conversion processing~~ includes

performing encryption processing ~~is executed~~ in correspondence with a message transmission destination specified according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

14. (currently amended) ~~An information processing~~ method ~~for~~ of processing ~~a~~ transmission of a message ~~among a plurality of sites connected via a network~~, ~~the~~ said method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

~~committing to an application processing of data that becomes necessary when message conversion is performed among the respective sites;~~

providing a local message exchange interface with a plurality of local sites of a system;

providing an external message exchange interface between the system and a plurality of sites external to the system;

receiving a message from a sending site that is one of the plurality of local sites or one of the plurality of external sites;

checking sentence construction of the message;

performing ~~mutual~~ conversion between any two of a plurality of message formats on the message ~~according to a prescribed conditional sentence~~ in response to ~~an arrival of~~ a field that is contained in the message and which serves~~ing~~ as a trigger ~~in~~ for a specific one of the plurality of message formats;

transmitting a request to and receiving an answer from an application or database that is needed to carry out data exchange processing between the sending site and at least one destination site;

adding a destination address to the message according to an ~~prescribed~~ associated piece of identification information contained in the message;

combining the message with another message having the destination address when the another message exists, the another message being received from another one of the plurality of local sites or from another one of the plurality of external sites~~providing a message exchange interface between a system and a site outside the system~~;

decomposing the message into a plurality of messages corresponding to a plurality of a destination addresses when the piece of identification information is associated with the plurality of a destination addresses;

processing the addressed message or the plurality of addressed messages for transmission to one or more of the plurality of external sites using the external ~~providing a~~ message exchange interface when the message was received from the one of the plurality of local sites~~between the system and a local site inside the system, wherein the message is transmittable so as to distribute information among a plurality of traders at the plurality of sites~~; and

~~performing message translation which, when no rules are provided for~~ processing the addressed message~~,~~ ~~checks sentence construction of~~ or the plurality of addressed messages for transmission to the destination address or to the plurality of destination addresses using the local message exchange interface when the message was received from the one of the plurality of external sites~~and performs translation of the message,~~

~~wherein the message conversion converts the message into a prescribed format according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message~~.

15. - 16. (cancelled)

17. (currently amended) The network system according to claim ~~15~~21, wherein ~~the~~ said message ~~conversion part~~ translator is operable to converts the message into a prescribed format

according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

18. (currently amended) The network system according to claim ~~15~~21, wherein ~~the~~ said message ~~conversion part~~ translator is operable to specify~~ies~~ a message transmission destination according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

19. (currently amended) The network system according to claim ~~15~~21, wherein ~~the~~ said message ~~conversion part~~ translator is operable to perform~~s~~ automatic protocol conversion according to a message transmission destination specified according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

20. (currently amended) The network system according to claim ~~15~~21, wherein ~~the~~ said message ~~conversion part~~ translator is operable to perform~~s~~ encryption processing in correspondence with a message transmission destination specified according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

21. (currently amended) A network system, ~~including~~ comprising:

a plurality of local sites; and ~~each two of which are connected via a communication network, wherein~~

a server operable to control message ~~exchange between~~ transmission to or from ~~arbitrary~~ a given one of said plurality of local sites ~~is controlled by a prescribed server, and the network system as its interior processing parts on the prescribed server~~, ~~the network system comprising~~said server including:

a gateway operable to provide a local message exchange interface with said plurality of local sites,

a B2B connector operable to provide an external message exchange interface between the system and a plurality of sites external to the system, ~~a message broker that commits to a prescribed application on the~~

~~server processing of data that becomes necessary when message conversion is performed between the plurality of sites;~~

a message translator ~~that~~ operable to perform~~s~~ ~~mutual exchange~~ conversion between ~~the~~ any two of a plurality of message formats on a message received from a sending site that is one of said plurality of local sites or one of the plurality of external sites, ~~according to a prescribed conditional sentence~~ said conversion being performed in response to ~~an arrival of~~ a field that is contained in the message and which serves~~ing~~ as a trigger ~~in~~ for a specific one of the plurality of message format~~s~~, ~~wherein when no rules are provided for processing the message, the message translator~~ and to check~~s~~ sentence construction of the message ~~and~~ prior to perform~~ings~~ said translation of the message~~,~~ ~~;~~

a message broker operable to transmit a request to and to receive an answer from an application or database that is needed to carry out data exchange processing between the sending site and at least one destination site,

a message router ~~that~~ operable to add~~s~~ a destination address to the message according to an ~~prescribed~~ associated piece of identification information contained in the message, to combine the message with another message having the destination address when the another message exists, the another message being received from another one of the plurality of local sites or from another one of the plurality of external sites, and to decompose the message into a plurality of messages corresponding to a plurality of a destination addresses when the piece

of identification information is associated with the plurality of a destination addresses, ~~,~~

said ~~a~~ B2B connector ~~that provides a~~ being operable to process the addressed message ~~exchange interface between a system and a~~ or the plurality of addressed messages for transmission to one or more of the plurality of external sites when the message was received from the one of the plurality of local sites, ~~outside the system,~~ and

said ~~a~~ gateway ~~that provides~~ being operable to process the addressed message ~~exchange interface between the system and a~~ or the plurality of addressed messages for transmission to one or more of the plurality of local sites ~~inside the system, wherein~~ when the message ~~is transmittable so as to distribute information among a plurality of traders at~~ was received from the one of the plurality of external sites ~~,~~

~~wherein the message conversion converts the message into a prescribed format according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message~~.

22. - 25. (cancelled)

26. (new) The information processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said message router includes:

a message separator operable to decompose the message into the plurality of messages corresponding to the plurality of destination addresses,

a mail box operable to retain the plurality of messages corresponding to the plurality of destination addresses, and

a message director operable to determine the transmission destination of the message according to the contents of the message.

27. (new) The information processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said message router includes:

a rule accumulation part operable to accumulate a plurality of rules for executing said message conversion performed by said message translator,

said message broker being operable to transmit the request to and receive the answer from the application or database if no rules exist that are applicable to the message, and said rule accumulation part being operable to extract a new rule from the answer received from the application or database.

28. (new) The information processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said message translator is operable to convert the message into a prescribed format according to a transmission origin of the message and contents of the message.

29. (new) The information processing method according to claim 14, wherein said step of adding a destination address includes:

retaining in a mail box the plurality of messages corresponding to the plurality of destination addresses, and

determining the transmission destination of the message according to the contents of the message.

30. (new) The information processing method according to claim 14, wherein said step of adding a destination address includes:

accumulating a plurality of rules for executing said message conversion step, and

if no rules exist that are applicable to the message, extracting a new rule from the answer received from the application or database.

31. (new) The network system according to claim 21, wherein said message router includes:

a message separator operable to decompose the message into the plurality of messages corresponding to the plurality of a destination addresses,

a mail box operable to retain the plurality of messages corresponding to the plurality of destination addresses, and

a message director operable to determine the transmission destination of the message according to the contents of the message.

32. (new) The network system according to claim 21, wherein said message router includes:

a rule accumulation part operable to accumulate a plurality of rules for executing said message conversion performed by said message translator,

said message broker being operable to transmit the request to and receive the answer from the upper-order application or database if no rules exist that are applicable to the message, and said rule accumulation part being operable to extract a new rule from the answer received from the upper-order application or database.